

Major Crofoot's Old Landlady Visits Him

Makes Herself at Home and Forces a Settlement of an Old Claim.

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MAJOR CROFOOT, grand promoter and generally hard up man, was sitting in his office at 10 o'clock the other forenoon and wondering what had become of all the suckers in town, when the door quietly opened and a woman entered. The major had forgotten to lock the door, and he gave a start of surprise and turned pale. The woman advanced into the room, removed her bonnet and cloak and sat down. There was but little fire in the stove, and the room was chilly. After sitting for a moment she rose up and dumped into the stove the hod of coal which the ma-



"WILL A LITTLE CHECK FOR \$500 WIN BACK YOUR GOOD OPINION?"

For had just borrowed of the shoemaker upstairs and which he meant to last him a whole week.

"Great heavens, but what are you doing?" he shouted at her as he saw black ruin staring him in the fact.

She turned from the stove and sat down and said:

"Major, I have come visiting, and I want to be comfortable. You remember me, of course?"

To do the major justice, he didn't. It had been five years since he saw her. He peered at her for awhile, and then a smile of recognition came to his face and he exclaimed:

"It can't be, and yet it must be my old landlady, Mrs. Pillsbury?"

"Just so," she replied, as she took

her knitting out of a bag and began to knit.

"But let us shake hands," said the major as he rose up and offered his. "Why, my dear, dear woman, I supposed you were under the sod long ago. I can't think it possible that I see you here alive."

"Never mind the hand shake, major. Shake hands with yourself if you feel like shaking. You should have had a better fire this morning. How is the deadbeat business?"

"Ah, I see what you are driving at, and I am glad you called and gave me a chance to explain. Mrs. Pillsbury—my dear old landlady—when I left your boarding house a few months ago I was owing you about a dollar, I believe."

"When you left my boarding house, over four years ago, you owed me seventeen dollars," she corrected.

Starts His Jollying.

"Over four years ago and seventeen dollars! It doesn't seem possible, and yet I will take your word for it. How time flies! How the exact amount of our debts escapes us! Well, well, well, but I am rejoiced to see you once more and in the flesh. You must have recovered from your attack of the small-pox?"

"I never had an attack."

"What! What! My dear soul of goodness, you don't tell me that you escaped scot free?"

The woman laughed, but made no reply.

"Why, my dear," said the major as he walked about, "the night I left your boarding house I was told that you and several of the boarders were in bed with the dread epidemic and had no show to get well. As a matter of fact, I was ordered by a red headed policeman to pack my trunk and go."

"But you didn't pack your trunk and take it along. It was a dollar trunk. I found it next day, with two old shirts in it. You went at midnight, and you went by way of the alley window."

"I could dispute you, my dear old guardian angel, but I shall not do so. It is barely possible that I did leave by way of the alley and neglected to take my trunk along. The smallpox news naturally put me in a panic. Three days later when on my way to the house to ring the bell and ask after you I was told by the peanut man on the corner that you were dead and buried. Shall I say that tears filled my eyes as I heard his words? Shall I say that I never slept for an hour that night? Shall I say—"

"I don't think I would," interrupted the woman as she smoothed at the stocking she was knitting.

"Had I known whom to send the \$17 to," said the major as he tried to work a quaver into his tones, "of course it would have been sent. I should have sent at least \$100 above the debt. You were kind to me, Mrs. Pillsbury, when I needed kindness, and I never forget my friends. However, let the past be the past. You are here now, and I can

show my gratitude. Will a little check for \$500 win back your good opinion?"

Mrs. Pillsbury indulged in a hearty laugh.

Has the Laugh on Him.

"But stay. Instead of a check for \$500, suppose I give you the secretaryship of a new company I have just promoted. It is called the Great American Folding Bed company and starts out with a capital of \$3,000,000 and orders from the czar of Russia and half a dozen kings and emperors. The old fashioned folding bed had a trick of folding up at night and catching the sleeper and breaking his back. Our bed never folds up except in the daytime, and human life is therefore safe. The secretaryship will pay you \$500 a year, and you will have so little to do at the office that you can run your boarding house as well. When I was hard up and could not see my way clear you trusted me. Instead of hounding me for my board and making things worse all around you let my indebtedness drift along and showed that you felt for me. I never can forget it. Take the secretaryship, Mrs. Pillsbury, in payment of the bread you cast on the waters."

Mrs. Pillsbury simply grinned as she worked away at her knitting.

"My dear woman, what's the matter?"

She grinned a little harder.

"You can't possibly distrust my intentions, my dear woman? Since I came into my patrimony I have taken the greatest pleasure in paying off my little indebtedness in other days. If you are not satisfied with \$500 in place of \$17, why?"

"We shall want some more coal pretty soon, major," observed the caller.

"What do you mean by that?"

"It isn't 11 o'clock yet. I expect to be here all day and perhaps for two or three days."

"Good Lord!"

"That is, I shall stay until I get my money."

"But I have offered you the secretaryship of the Great American Folding Bed company, positively guaranteed not to fold up and break any one's back between sunset and sunrise."

Mrs. Pillsbury grinned several grins.

He Comes to Time.

"But as you don't seem inclined to take it," continued the major, "and as I want to get the debt off my hands at once I will go out and borrow the money."

He walked to the door, but it would not open. The woman had locked it and put the key in her pocket. He looked around at her, and she smiled benevolently.

"I can't raise \$17 to save my neck," he finally said.

"I know it," she replied, "and so I am going to offer to take \$7 and call it square."

The major sat down and counted up. He had 40 cents over the amount, but not another cent in sight for two weeks. He looked appealingly at Mrs. Pillsbury.

"Seven or I sit right here for a week," she said.

"My dear, dear old landlady, whom I thought dead!"

"Cut it out, major!"

He did. He handed over the \$7, and she put on her hat and cloak, bundled up her knitting and unlocked the door and grinned a farewell.

"By thunder!" gasped the promoter as he stood and surveyed the open door.

Then he rushed to the stove and threw open the door to save all the heat he could and sat down in his office chair and once more exclaimed:

"By thunder!" M. QUAD.

Why It's So.

Simkins—Windham seems to think he knows it all.

Timkins—Well, he's not to blame.

Simkins—Not to blame!

Timkins—No; he has no children old enough to ask questions.—Detroit Tribune.

The Wedding Present.



The Bride (in one breath)—This is from that horrid, contemptible Edith Welsh, who is so—er—why, dear, I do believe it's real china—now wasn't that sweet of the darling?—Woman's Home Companion.

Practical.

"Why do you teach your children to recite and sing?"

"Well," answered the practical woman, "there has to be some way of starting people who come to see you and forget when it's time to go home."

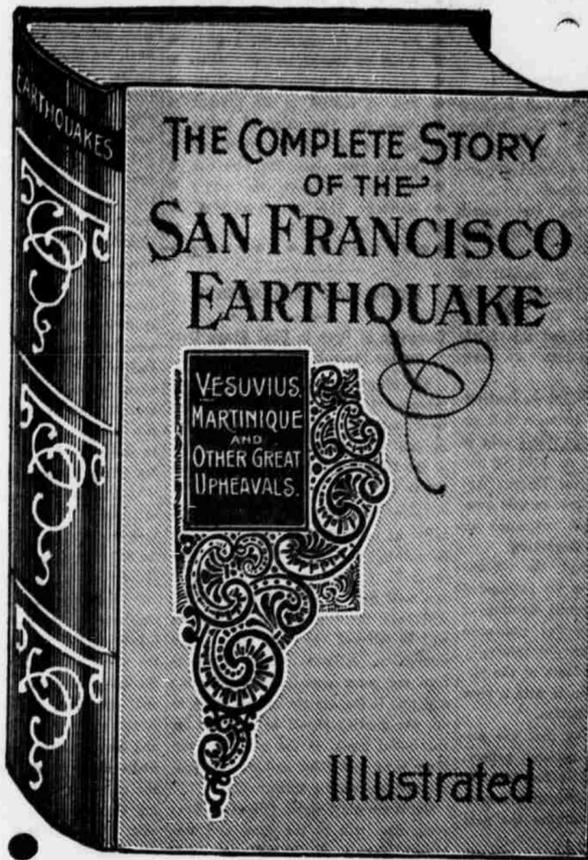
—Washington Star.

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